TWIST

Journal homepage: www.twistjournal.net

Investigating Challenges and Approaches for Teaching Irregular Verb Orthography:

South African Primary School Teachers' Perspectives

Farisani Thomas Nephawe
University of Venda, South Africa

Abstract

Teaching irregular verb orthography to non-native primary school learners is challenging worldwide, especially if limited exposure to English reigns supreme. The paper investigated challenges and approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography to selected primary school learners. The objectives were to identify approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools, describe and assess their effectiveness. The population of this study comprised 35 Grade 7 English First Additional Language teachers in South African primary schools. Six purposively selected teachers participated in the study. A descriptive qualitative approach was adopted to explore and describe the teaching of irregular verb orthography in depth. The researcher used semi-structured face-to-face interviews and classroom observation to collect data. The initial investigation revealed challenges experienced by teachers in teaching irregular verb orthography. However, after using the orthographic mapping approaches, teachers produced outstanding performance in learners. Although this study's limitations were the time factor and sampling process, its implication advocates using orthographic mapping approaches to mitigate teachers' challenges. The identified approaches benefit teachers and learners. Future researchers can further research the current topic. The study recommends frequently using the identified approaches to enhance learners' performance using irregular verb orthography.

Keywords

Approaches, Competence, Irregular verbs, Orthography, Teachers' challenges

INTRODUCTION

Teaching irregular verb orthography is an indispensable activity for enhancing learners' competence in the English language. Irregular verb orthography entails the practice of correct spelling based on the established usage involving letters that express sounds and form words (Norquist, 2019). Irregular verb orthography is required to enhance learners' language abilities in phonology, morphology, visual memory and semantic relationships (Chhorn, 2025).

During the identification and analysis of orthographic errors in texts written by speakers of English First Additional Language (EFAL), learners experience difficulties using irregular verb orthography, especially with limited exposure to the language (Zhang et al., 2022; Juffs & Naismith, 2025). Suarez Sanchez (2025) adds that learning EFAL can be challenging, especially for those still in the initial stages of learning. Nevertheless, these difficulties are exacerbated by children's poor grammatical competence and minimal language performance.

Orthography is primarily regular pattern-based (Sarem & Lotfi, 2025) as its letters predictably represent their sound patterns. It is "the ability to write a word or group of words with the required letters in the standardised way they are pronounced" (Nikade, 2022: 11). However, irregular verb orthography differs according to the geographical location (Joshi et al., 2022). For example, in the US English, 'practice' is a verb or a noun, whereas in the UK, it is a verb (Kashifa et al. 2025). Nevertheless, second language learners can produce spelling errors although they hear the words correctly, syllabicate and segment them at the phoneme level and identify the sound produced (Amirzhanova et al., 2025; Mehlhase, 2025) by the language's fluent speakers.

Lubis et al. (2025:244) claim that "with the advancement of technology, spelling mistakes can occur both unintentionally and intentionally, influenced by factors such as technological features, user habits, and social context".

Teaching irregular verb orthography to primary school learners poses challenges to EFAL teachers. Therefore, learners who are poor in spelling do not produce close estimates of target words (Sektnan, 2025) and depart from standard conventions and orthography. Additionally, poor spellers restrict what they write and suffer from unavoidable loss of verbal power (Sektnan, 2025).

As learning to read relies on the relationships between letters and sounds, Mehlhase (2025) claims that knowing irregular verb orthography advocates robust language performance. However, inability to spell, in this regard, results in ambiguity and misinterpretation of English as spelling depends on the relationships between letters and sounds (Rigobon et al., 2025). In formal written contexts, spelling errors lower the message sender's credibility and cause comprehension confusion (Lubis et al., 2025). Thus, praising someone for excellent irregular verb orthography is pointless (Flanigan, 2025).

Numerous studies, including Fitiria (2020), Imtiaz et al. (2023), Majola et al (2024), Amirazhanova et al. (2025), Lubis et al. (2025), Madaun et al. (2025), Sektnan (2025), and Siswoyo (2025), have consistently been conducted on irregular verb orthography in the English language worldwide (Zhang et al., 2022). However, limited information has been provided on mitigating teachers' challenges when teaching irregular verb orthography. For example, Fitiria (2020) examined the use of irregular verb orthography and found that learners committed a few errors. Imtiaz et al. (2023) analysed the use of spelling by the English second language (L2) learners and found that they committed irregular verb orthographic errors. Majola et al (2024) investigated the spelling in some names of towns and villages in the Eastern Cape and discovered that several spelling errors were committed.

Amirazhanova et al. (2025) investigated the use of irregular verb orthography by 60 learners in their written works and found several orthographic errors. Lubis et al. (2025) explored the use of irregular verb orthography and discovered several errors learners committed. Madaun et al. (2025) studied irregular verb orthography and found that learners were troubled using the '-ing' suffix for the present progressive tense and '-s/es' in the simple present tense. Sektnan (2025) investigated the use of irregular verb orthography on 30 elementary learners in a Western Pennsylvania School District and found that several errors were committed. Similarly, Siswoyo (2025) investigated irregular verb orthography and found that learners committed omission, misformation, and addition errors.

LITERATURE REVIEW
The paper was underpinned by Ann B. Dobie's (1986) orthographical theory and practice, which holds that challenges faced by EFAL teachers in this regard are prevalent and unconventional. The blame is apportioned to the factors, including the use of two or more words with similar sounds but differing in meanings and origins (Hickey, 2025), portmanteau words such as 'misspell' and 'roommate', 'unstressed' vowel (schwa /ə/) as in 'teacher and leather' and ambiguous or silent consonant sounds occurring at the root of some English language words like '-g-'consonant sound silent in the word 'sign' but audible in 'signature'; and '-c-' in 'muscle' and 'muscular' (Kashifa et al. 2025).

Mushtaq and Xue (2025) postulate that errors committed in using irregular verb orthography translate into learners' poor linguistic skills. However, if learners' strengths and weaknesses are identified, error development can be alleviated (Hickey, 2025). Lack of competence in using irregular verb orthography affects the user's literary stance and time spent writing a text, limiting lexical variety in written communication (Rigobon et al., 2025). However, 'correct spelling affects someone's first impression of writing and can influence the reader's understanding and interpretation of the content' (Siregar et al., 2025) and promotes cultural awareness that mitigates these errors. Therefore, spelling is indispensable in every writing endeavour. Teachers' knowledge of vocabulary is a prerequisite for learners' spelling competence. However, the type of instruction and the learners' spelling competence depend on the teacher's fundamental teaching skills, as the ability to impart knowledge is challenging.

Orthographic mapping approaches
During orthographic mapping approaches, teachers encompass phonemic awareness skills, letter-sound knowledge, morphology and syllabication rules and adequate practice to develop fluency and automaticity in word recognition (Endo, 2023; Nordquist, 2023). They can involve phoneme-grapheme mapping using sound boxes, word sorts focusing on specific orthographic patterns, and creating pattern-based spelling lists rather than content-based (Parkin, 2025). The memorisation of written irregular verb orthography can be enhanced by 1) *Categorising and grouping irregular verbs using identifying patterns, such as similar patterns from verbs that change base forms, add a vowel, vowel changes, and irregular forms that* remain the same. 2) *Focusing on the third person* singular, where the '-s' or '-es' ending of irregular verbs is emphasised. 3*) Engaging learners in contextual practice* of irregular verb sentences, sentences with missing irregular verb forms to complete and connecting irregular verbs to real-life situations and conversations. 4) *Engaging learners in spelling's explicit instruction and rule understanding* by teaching conventional spelling and syllabication rules, common letter sequences, words based on their affixations (Korochkina et al., 2025) and practising high-frequency spell words with longer intervals and increasing lessons between each review.

The following diagram, proposed by Endo (2023: parag. 5), assists with understanding how orthographic mapping in spelling occurs:
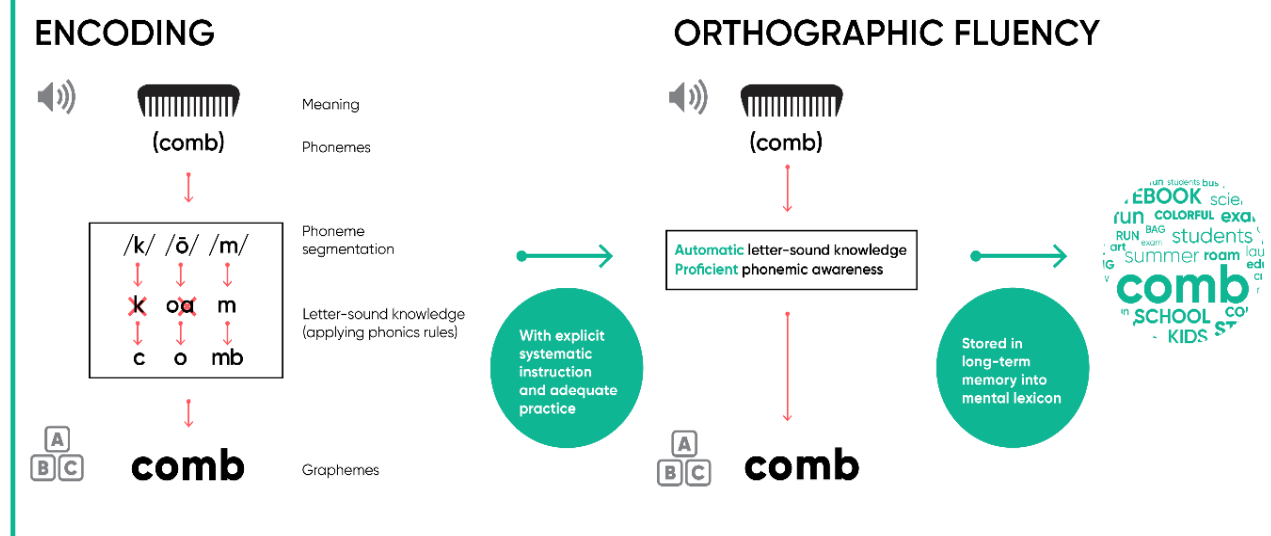
Fig. 1 Orthographic Mapping in Spelling
(**Adapted from:** Endo's (2023) orthographic mapping)

The diagram illustrated supra shows that orthographic mapping in spelling is versatile and can have a remarkable throughput if used appropriately (Endo, 2023). However, in these approaches, learners frequently practise the letters of the alphabet, phonemic awareness, letter-sound knowledge, morphology, syllabication and orthographic fluency. They store words in their long-term memory, recognise and retrieve 'sight words' to develop orthographic knowledge regarding letter patterns, specific sounds, letter sequences and their positions, such as initial, medial, or final (Ho et al., 2025). Learners encode phonemes into graphemes, segment them, and correspond each sound to the letter patterns, apply their advanced phonics, morphology, and syllabication rules; and increase their exposure and practice to secure new vocabulary into memory through connecting their meaning with the words' pronunciations and spellings and automatically retrieve the spelling of the words accurately and with ease.

The objectives of the current study are to identify approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools, describe and assess their effectiveness. This study endeavoured to answer these research questions, namely, 1) What are the objectives for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools? 2) How can the approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools be described? 3) How effective are the approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at a South African Primary school?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This researcher used a descriptive qualitative research approach to explore and describe the views, coping, and well-being of the participants (Ayton, 2023), informing the approaches that could improve formal and informal support regarding the use of irregular verb orthography in great depth. This approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, skills, and the contextual factors influencing competence in using irregular verb orthography (Salma et al., 2025). The researcher gained insight into the teaching of irregular verb orthography, described the classroom setting incorporating spelling practice, interpreted learners' competence in using spelling, tested the validity of the identified approaches and evaluated the suitable approaches for spelling teaching.

Research design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to provide a straightforward description of the experiences and perceptions of teachers when little was known about the use of irregular verb orthography (Ayton, 2023). Additionally, it allowed the researcher to gather and present context-specific information regarding the real-world setting, be it social, cultural, economic, structural, geographical, political, or temporal dimensions that influence irregular verb orthography (Potterie et al., 2025). It helped the researcher understand why or how specific patterns or behaviours occurred and was crucial when investigating approaches aimed at guiding the teaching of irregular verb orthography to selected primary school learners. Furthermore, this study utilised flexibility and exploration research design to allow the researcher to borrow approaches from other qualitative designs rather than phenomenology or grounded theory, which explain the phenomenon.

Population and sampling

The population of this study comprised 35 Grade 7 EFAL teachers in South African primary schools in the Mvudi Circuit, Limpopo Province. Six purposively selected teachers participated in the study based on their experiences teaching the subject for at least five years and specific characteristics relevant to their research question, to gather in-depth insights from teachers who could offer unique perspectives or experiences (Omair, 2025). The criteria for selecting participants were determined by the research objectives, concept of testing, case study and the target population's characteristics, including expertise, unique experiences, diversity of perspectives and demographics (Zhang & Haug, 2025). Also, opportunity and convenient sampling were employed to invite easily approachable participants from a large sample of teachers in the Mvudi Circuit in Limpopo Province, South Africa.

The study's population comprised 35 Grade 7 EFAL teachers in South African primary schools. Six purposively selected teachers participated in the study as follows:

Table 1 Demographic Profile for Teachers (n=6)

Participants	Gender	Age	Academic Qualifications	Teaching Experience	Language Competency
One	Male	30	Diploma	7 years	Poor
Two	Female	47	Diploma	11 year	Good
Three	Male	27	Honours	4 years	Good
Four	Female	33	Master	9 years	Good
Five	Female	25	Diploma	1 year	Good
Six	Female	27	Honours	2 years	Good

Figure 1 represents data visualisation using participants ' age, gender, academic qualifications, teaching experience and competency in English. The figure is arranged into seven rows and six columns. Six participants were represented as Participants, One to Six, to observe the ethical considerations. Four of the six participants were females, while the other two were males. The age ranges between 25 and 47. Participant One was 30 years old, Participant Two was 47, Participant Three and Participant Six were 27, Participant Four was 33, and Participant Five was 25. There were three diplomas, two Honours and one Master. Participants One, Two and Five had Diplomas, Three and Six with Honours and Four with a master's degree. All participants were competent except one, who was poor.

Data collection

Data were collected using semi-structured face-to-face interviews and classroom observation in the form of administered written composition to collect rich, qualitative data (Boutilie et al., 2025) that can explore the suitable approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography and content analysis of the written essays to explore learners' orthographic proficiency (Potterie et al., 2025). The researcher defined objectives and research questions, chose an appropriate interview format, prepared questions to develop a clear and concise interview guide, selected participants from the identified population, prepared for the interview by choosing a suitable location and time and having necessary recording equipment. The exact steps followed were that the researcher 1) introduced himself, and 2) explained the purpose of the interview. 3) established rapport with the participants. 4) asked questions clearly and listened carefully. 5) Used probing questions. 6) maintained neutrality by avoiding leading or biased questions. 6) recorded the interview and 7) took detailed notes. Using content analysis, the researcher designed a detailed and systematic exploration of the approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography and themes/pattern identification.

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the school principals, Mvudi Circuit Manager, and the Limpopo Province's Department of Education in South Africa. Confidentiality and anonymity were observed because the researcher did not use learners' names or the names of the primary schools from which data were collected. However, the researcher used numbers instead. Data were stored in a safe place after being analysed. In this investigation, the researcher ensured the participants were protected from psychological or physiological harm during data collection.

Data Analysis

Data were analysed using thematic analysis because it could package the codes, identify the patterns, and develop themes (Potterie et al., 2025) and analyse them from interview transcripts using a series of steps such as 1) Transcription of the interview recordings to organise the data 2) Review the transcripts and identification of key themes, patterns, and insights 3) Analysis of the data using appropriate qualitative approach. 4) Interpretation of the findings and draw conclusions based on the data. Thematic analysis could develop descriptive analysis to provide a nuanced understanding of the patterns observed in the qualitative data (Boutilie et al., 2025). The themes identified from the comments of several participants were compared with a single comment from one participant to indicate a relative saliency of one theme over another for a particular sample of the population (Potterie et al., 2025).

Trustworthiness of qualitative data

The steps for maintaining the trustworthiness of qualitative data were 1) To establish credibility, the researcher presented the results to the participants and asked for their input to confirm or clarify their opinions and experiences (Kim, 2025). 2) To enhance dependability, the researcher provided a clear and detailed account of the research procedures, ensuring that

the data collection and analysis methods were well-documented and replicable (Henson, 2025). 3) To enhance confirmability, the researcher critically reflected on the participants' assumptions and values that could influence the research process and interpretations to reduce the likelihood of bias by acknowledging and dealing with subjectivity (Ayadi et al., 2025). 4) To improve transferability, the researcher considered how the participants' viewpoints, biases, and presumptions affected the research method and results (Kim, 2025).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Since this study was aimed at answering the research questions based on the challenges and approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography in the present tense, the South African primary school teachers' perspectives are presented hereunder in line with the research objectives:

Findings from semi-structured face-to-face interviews

The researcher used a semi-structured approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of selecting suitable approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography. The perceptions obtained from six purposively selected teachers enabled the researcher to understand how important it is to use the orthographic mapping approaches to enhance the teaching of irregular verb orthography in the simple present tense. Additionally, the researchers wanted to probe the teachers' experience, skills, challenges encountered during the lesson presentation, and how they were resolved (Nephawe & Nemakhavhani). The researcher structured six contact sessions with teachers outside their physical contact with their students because he did not want to disturb their daily schoolwork routine.

In the semi-structured interview, each participant was interviewed for at least 15 minutes. The response from each interview session was recorded on the tape recorder and in a notebook to keep the data safe. The researcher transcribed, sorted, organised and analysed the findings obtained from teachers' perceptions regarding the suitability of employing orthographic mapping approaches to teach irregular verb orthography in the simple present tense. The researcher arranged transcripts according to the themes obtained from the semi-structured interviews. The researcher utilised an inductive thematic analysis approach to derive meaning (Nyaaba et al., 2025) and create themes from data. The six steps for utilising thematic analysis, according to Naeem et al. (2025: parag. 4), "were 1) transcription, familiarisation with data and the selection of quotations, 2) the selection of keywords, 3) coding that allowed the researchers to organise themes across a wide range of comments, coded and sorted the findings according to the intercoder reliability and reduce subjectivity and bias, 4) theme development, and 6) the development of a conceptual model".

The researcher coded six themes, and teachers were denoted as Participants One to Six. The themes and the participants' remarks from the series of semi-structured face-to-face interviews held between the researcher and the participants are presented hereunder:

Theme One: The teaching of English grammar is pervasive in primary schools.

The skill of teaching English grammar is indispensable because this language is primarily used in many educational endeavours. Teachers are expected to use English because it bridges the gap among different languages and is a prerequisite for the quest for new knowledge. Therefore, primary school teachers have much to say about the importance of teaching English grammar accordingly. In this theme, Teacher One commented that

Teaching English grammar to my learners makes them understand the language better. In my class, learners speak different languages, but when I use the English language. Also, their performance is often remarkable when I test verbally or in written form.

This comment shows that teaching English grammar is irreplaceable because it encourages teachers' morale and enhances learners' performance. Therefore, learners' understanding across most subjects can be cumbersome without teaching the basics of English grammar at the primary school level. This result aligns with Nikade (2022), who maintains that the ability to write a word or group of words with the required letters in the standardised way they are pronounced enhances competence in English.

Theme Two: Orthography is one grammatical element that enhances written English.

Orthography enhances written English in communication than any other grammatical element. Learners' performance is measured by the ability to write meaningful and understandable English words, without which deviant language can develop. In English, written communication uses meaningful sentences emanating from the correct spelling. Teachers' perceptions regarding the indispensability of appropriate orthography are of utmost importance. Thus, Teachers One and Two remarked that

When we want to improve learners' skills for writing cohesive and coherent texts, we teach students the ability to mitigate spelling errors. Our students' performance in written English is enhanced by teaching them grammar rules, although the irregular verb orthography is challenging.

Teachers One and Two perceive that errors can develop if learners are not taught English orthography. It is, therefore, essential to teach learners grammar rules to alleviate the development of orthographic errors. These perceptions are congruent with Imtiaz et al. (2023), who state that most primary school learners commit orthographic errors due to poor vocabulary and limited knowledge of the spelling system.

Theme Three: Irregular verb orthography enhances learners' competence in English.

Learners' competence in irregular verb orthography is required to produce clear and understandable English words. People whose mother tongue differs from English experience challenges since it is mainly used as a medium of instruction. Nevertheless, irregular verb orthography enhances learners' competence in English because it enriches their vocabulary. In this situation, Teacher Three postulates that

> *My learners' competence in the use of irregular verb orthography is exciting. Each time I pose questions to them, they respond positively. I will let my learners frequently practise spelling to enrich their vocabulary level.*

Teacher Three's postulation brings an awareness to the value of practising irregular verb orthography appropriately. Non-native English-speaking learners benefit from using irregular verb orthography. Additionally, understanding the irregular verb orthography brings confidence and competence in English. The finding supports (Chhorn, 2025), who claims that irregular verb orthography is required to enhance learners' language abilities in phonology, morphology, visual memory and semantic relationships.

Theme Four: Teaching irregular verb orthography is difficult.

Teaching irregular verb orthography is difficult because it is indispensable in improving learners' competence in English. In primary schools, teachers aspire to remarkable performance from the learners. However, the irregular verb orthography challenges most teachers due to its complex nature of not adding the s/-es ending to regular verbs. In most cases, teachers struggle to teach their learners the concept of irregular verb orthography. In this regard, Teacher Five commented that

> *When I teach irregular verb orthography to my learners, they seem to understand the concept. However, when I put them to the test, I usually discover that they do not perform as expected. They typically add an s/-es ending to regular and irregular verbs indiscriminately.*

This comment shows that teaching irregular verb orthography is difficult because teachers lack suitable approaches. They are troubled by the difficulties their irregular verb orthography poses. On the other hand, learners do not perform well in this grammatical element. The discovery aligns with Amirazhanova et al. (2025), who indicated that learners commit orthographic mistakes due to insufficient mastery of spelling rules.

Theme Five: Irregular verb orthography calls for innovative strategic intervention.

Innovative strategic intervention is pervasive in addressing the question of irregular verb orthography in English grammar. Without depending on these strategies, learners' performance in the English language is often distorted. Teachers of this language experience difficulties when imparting knowledge to their learners. For this reason, innovative strategic intervention is devised to mitigate challenges using irregular verb orthography. In this case, Teachers Two, Three and Four remarked that.

> *We appreciate identifying innovative strategic interventions because irregular verb orthography is challenging. When we teach our learners irregular verb orthography, we often struggle to find suitable strategies.*

From the above-mentioned remark, it is evident that the irregular verb orthography requires innovative teachers to teach spelling due to its difficulties. If EFL teachers aim to achieve remarkable throughput, it is high time they started using innovative strategic interventions to enhance learners' performance. The finding is congruent with Madaun et al. (2025), who suggest that irregular verb orthography requires innovative strategic teaching interventions to improve competence in the English language.

Theme Six: Orthographic mapping approaches enhance English language teaching.

In the quest for finding suitable strategies for teaching English professionally, teachers usually recommend using orthographic mapping approaches because of the positive results of using these strategies. Teachers, who depend on the appropriate use of orthographic mapping approaches, indicate their strong belief in these approaches. Teacher Six commented that

> *I use orthographic mapping approaches because my learners perform better in EFAL when I teach irregular verb orthography. Therefore, I will always rely on these approaches to enhance my lessons.*

This comment brings awareness to English language teachers at the primary school level and signals that orthographic mapping approaches have good implications for teaching irregular verb orthography. The finding contrasts with Amirazhanova et al. (2025), who suggest that learners commit orthographic mistakes due to insufficient mastery of spelling rules.

Findings from written essays

The researcher ensured that Teachers One to Six engaged their learners thoroughly in the administered written essays to avoid biases and obtain credible, reliable and valid language performance regarding irregular verb orthography. Leaners

were told, beforehand, the purpose of conducting document analysis. Also, learners were advised to write at least half a page or one page full on the topic titled 'What I usually do on Sundays' to capture the use of irregular verb orthography in the present tense. The essays were written within a specified period for each primary school. After completing the written essays, each teacher collected them and handed them to the researcher for assessment.

The results from the written essays revealed that learners committed the highest frequency of omission errors, followed by substitution errors. The finding supports Siswoyo's (2025) claim that EFAL learners commit errors irregular verb orthographic errors due to psychological and cognitive factors, including stress feelings, forgetfulness, and level of comprehension. Also, the addition errors were the fewest, followed by transposition. The findings support Imtiaz et al.'s (2023) suggestion that most EFAL learners commit orthographic errors due to poor vocabulary and limited knowledge of the spelling system.

CONCLUSION

In this study, the researcher attempted to investigate EFAL teachers' perspectives regarding suitable approaches for teaching irregular verb orthography in the present tense at the South African primary schools. The orthographic mapping approaches were identified due to their relevance in mitigating teachers' challenges when teaching irregular verb orthography to Grade 7 EFAL learners in South African primary schools. The research questions that the study attempted to answer were 'What are the objectives for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools?', 'How can the approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at the South African Primary schools be described?' and 'How effective are the approaches for mitigating the challenges teachers face when teaching irregular verb orthography at a South African Primary school?' Accordingly, the research questions in this study were answered.

Using semi-structured face-to-face interviews and document analysis involving the written essays administered by teachers, the researchers obtained data on teaching irregular verb orthography in the simple present tense. This study established that Grade 7 EFAL teachers are willing to utilise the orthographic mapping approaches due to their ability to enhance the teaching of irregular verb orthography. This study showed that orthographic mapping approaches are more effective in teaching irregular verb orthography in the present tense. The perceptions obtained from semi-structured face-to-face interviews and written essays are appropriate in recommending orthographic mapping approaches for enhancing the teaching of irregular verb orthography. Therefore, the findings in this study promote the indispensability of employing orthographic mapping approaches to improve English language performance by Grade 7 EFAL teachers.

This study implies that teachers are expected to apply orthographic mapping approaches to enhance the teaching of irregular verb orthography. Nevertheless, the limitation of this study was the time factor because essays were only written during the class periods and could not have gone beyond the specified times. Also, convenience sampling was another limitation because only six EFAL teachers were sampled from the whole Mvudi Circuit in the Limpopo Province, South Africa, due to the approachability and willingness of teachers to participate in the study.

The scientific contribution of this study is that teachers obtain appropriate approaches for teaching the irregular verb orthography in the simple present tense. Teachers can gain awareness using orthographic mapping approaches that enhance competence in teaching irregular verb orthography. EFAL learners can learn and use irregular verb orthography appropriately. The English syllabus developer and English language curriculum advisors can develop and encourage the frequent use of learning orthographic mapping approaches in teaching the irregular verb orthography. Correspondingly, future researchers can further research the suitability of orthographic mapping approaches in teaching irregular verb orthography in the simple present tense. This study recommends continuous use of the identified strategies to enhance the teaching of English irregular verb orthography to Grade 7 EFAL learners worldwide.

FUNDING INFORMATION

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT

The author declares that he has no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

REFERENCES

1. Amirzhanova, N., Soltanbekova, A., Urkinbayev, S., Ramazanov, T., Sadyk, A., & Zhunusova, M. (2025). Typology of orthographic interference: Linguistic foundations for improving the national writing system. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, pp.467-484. https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i3.7109
2. Ayadi, N., Fatehizade, M., & Etemadi, O. (2025). Challenges of Remarriage: A Qualitative Study of Remarried Individuals' Perceptions in Blended Families. *The Family Journal*, pp.10664807251321522. https://doi.org/10.1177/10664807251321522
3. Ayton, D. (2023). *Qualitative descriptive research.* Open Educational Resources Collective. https://oercollective.caul.edu.au/qualitative-research/chapter/__unknown__-5/
4. Boutilier, A. J., Clark, K. D., Bosse, J. D., Jackman, K. B., Jewell, J., & Dawson-Rose, C. (2025). Social-ecological barriers and facilitators to seeking inpatient psychiatric care among transgender and nonbinary people: A qualitative descriptive study. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *81*(4), 1937-1952. https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.16393

5. Chhorn, T. (2025). Cognisance of Applied Linguistics: Phonology, Lexicoalogy, Morphology, & Syntaxology. *Journal of Education Innovation and Language Teaching (JEILT)*, pp.1-203. https://doi.org/10.63381/jeilt.vi.1

6. Dobie, A.B (1986). Orthographical theory and practice, or how to teach spelling. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 5 (2): 41-48.

7. Endo, A. (2023). *What is orthographic mapping in reading, and why is it important?* https://www.hmhco.com/blog/what-is-orthographic-mapping-in-reading

8. Fitria, T.N. (2020). Spelling error analysis in learners' written English composition. *Getsempena English Education Journal (GEEJ),* 7(2), 240-254.

9. Flanigan, J. (2025). *Why It's OK to Have Bad Spelling and Grammar*. Taylor & Francis.

10. Henson, A., & Blount-Hill, K. L. (2025). "Respect the Badge": Exploring the use of respect to survive during police encounters. *Justice Quarterly*, pp. 1-33. https://doi.org/10.1080/07418825.2025.2481093

11. Hickey, R. (2025). The sociolinguistics of mergers. *World Englishes*, *44*(1-2), 43-56. https://doi.org/10.1111/weng.12687

12. Ho, J. C. S., Reed, D. K., & McBride, C. (2025). The effects of orthography, phonology, semantics, and working memory on the reading comprehension of children with and without reading dyslexia. *Annals of Dyslexia*, pp.1-16. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-025-00322-5

13. Imtiaz, M., Hassan, K. H. U., & Akmal, F. (2023). Analysing spelling errors committed by English as a second language (ESL) learners at the secondary school level. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, *3*(2), 181-189. https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i2.246

14. Joshi, R. M., Wijekumar, K., & Gillespie Rouse, A. (2022). International perspectives on spelling and writing in different orthographies: Introduction to the special series. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *55*(2), 83-86.

15. Juffs, A., & Naismith, B. (2025). Identifying and analysing 'noisy' spelling errors in a second language corpus. In *Proceedings of the Tenth Workshop on Noisy and User-generated Text* (pp. 26-37). https://aclanthology.org/2025.wnut-1.4.pdf

16. Kashifa, A., Safeer, N., Mubeen, A., & Sidrat-ul-Muntaha, S. (2025). Vowel duration and L1 influence in Pakistani English: An acoustic analysis of English monophthongs. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, *8*(1), 850-863.

17. Kim, J. (2025). Healthcare Professionals' Perceptions and Experiences of Ageism: A Qualitative Study. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, *22*(3), 350. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph22030350

18. Korochkina, M., Cooper, H., Brysbaert, M., & Rastle, K. (2025). *Morpheme knowledge is shaped by information available through orthography*, pp.1-16. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8017-7855

19. Lubis, Y., Nur, A., Sitorus, P. H., & Dalimunthe, Q. L. (2025). Word Spelling Errors in Messages. *Fonologi: Jurnal Ilmuan Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris*, *3*(1), 244-251. https://doi.org/10.61132/fonologi.v3i1.1458

20. Madanun, N. R. S., Bochari, S., & Marhum, M. (2025). A study of verb inflection usage in sentences by EFL learners: challenges and trends. *Acuity: Journal of English Language Pedagogy, Literature and Culture*, *10*(1), 130-144. https://doi.org/10.35974/acuity.v10i1.3803

21. Majola, Y.L.P., Mandende, I.P., & Cekiso, M. (2024). A linguistic analysis of spelling errors of selected indigenous town and village names in the Eastern Cape, South Africa. *Nomina Africana: Journal of African Onomastics*, *38*(1), 1-2. https://doi.org/10.2989/NA.2024.38.1.5.1383

22. Mehlhase, H., Sigmund, J. L., Schulte-Körne, G., & Moll, K. (2025). Sound–symbol learning and the relationship to spelling in first-grade children. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, *252*, p. 106158. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jecp.2024.106158

23. Mushtaq, O., & Xue, X. (2025). Reviewing phonological variations in Pakistani and Chinese English: Challenges for Chinese listener comprehension. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and TESOL (JALT)*, *8*(1), 1320-1341.

24. Naeem, M., Smith, T., & Thomas, L. (2025). Thematic analysis and Artificial Intelligence: A step-by-step process for using ChatGPT in thematic Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *24*, pp.16094069251333886. https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069251333886

25. Nephawe, F. T., & Nemakhavhani, M. S. (2024). Analysing the indispensability of scaffolding strategies to enhance the teaching of English syntactical structures to Grade 10 learners. *Journal of English Language Studies*, *9*(2), 172-190. https://jurnal.untirta.ac.id/index.php/JELS

26. Nikade, E. C. (2022). Trending writing styles affecting formal communication: A case study of spelling errors on Facebook, WhatsApp and Instagram. *International Journal of Innovative Language, Literature & Art Studies*, *10*(1), 10-23.

27. Nordquist, R. (2023). "*Definitions and examples of orthography*." ThoughtCo. thoughtco.com/what-is-orthography-1691463

28. Nyaaba, M., SungEun, M., Apam, M. A., Acheampong, K. O., & Dwamena, E. (2025). Optimising Generative AI's accuracy and transparency in Inductive Thematic Analysis: A Human-AI Comparison. *arXiv preprint arXiv:2503.16485*. https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2503.16485

29. Omair, A. (2025). Sample size estimation and sampling techniques for selecting a representative sample. *Journal of Health Specialities*, *2*(4), 142. https://doi.org/10.4103/1658-600X.142783

30. Parkin, J. R., Hajovsky, D. B., & Alfonso, V. C. (2025). Describing the relationship between word decoding, oral language, phonemic awareness, and the orthographic lexicon in the KTEA-3 and WIAT-4. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, p.07342829241297820. https://doi.org/10.1177/07342829241297820

31. Potterie, C., Kruger, H. S., Faber, M., & Ricci, H. (2025). Insight into the complexities of human nutrition and holistic health: the value of qualitative descriptive research. *South African Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, *38*(1), 37-41. https://doi.org/10.1080/16070658.2025.2454798

32. Rigobon, V., Gutiérrez, N., Edwards, A., Steacy, L., & Compton, D. (2025). *Investigating individual differences in adult bilinguals' spelling of cognates: An analysis of cross-linguistic effects*, pp.1-58.

33. Salma, J., Au, A., Sayadi, G., & Kleib, M. (2025). Digital competence of Arabic-speaking immigrant and refugee older adults enacting agency and navigating barriers: Qualitative Descriptive Study. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *27*, p.e60547.https://doi.org/10.2196/60547

34. Sarem, S. N., & Lotfi, A. H. (2025). *Journal of Second Language Pedagogy*, pp.18-32. https://www.sanad.iau.ir/journal/jslp

35. Sektnan, J. T. (2025). *Not a One-Size-Fits-All Approach: Examining the impact of Systematic K-6 Spelling Instruction* (Doctoral dissertation, Youngstown State University). http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=ysu1739871007342059

36. Siregar, M. E. H., Askya, S., Hasibuan, P. R. U., & Lubis, Y. (2025). The learners' ability to study spelling. *Jurnal Publikasi Manajemen Informatika*, *4*(1), 98-108.

37. Siswoyo, S. S. (2025). Error analysis is used in English nominal and verbal sentences. *Jurnal Smart: Journal of English Language*, *Teaching and Applied Linguistics*, *11*(1), 96-106. https://ejournal.umpri.ac.id/index.php/smart/index

38. Suarez Sanchez, M. E. (2025). *Phoneme-grapheme mapping practice as a didactic reading strategy for EFL fourth-grade learners* (Bachelor's thesis, La Libertad, Universidad Estatal Península de Santa Elena). https://repositorio.upse.edu.ec/handle/46000/13051

39. Zhang, S., Breuer, E.O, Grünke, R. & Joshi, R.M. (2022). Using spelling error analyses to examine individual differences in German Learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds: a Latent Class Approach. *Journal of learning disabilities*, 55(2), 123-137. https://doi.org/ 10.1177/00222194211059820 journaloflearningdisabilities.sagepub.com

40. Zhang, L. C., & Haug, J. K. (2025). Turnover flash estimation by purposive sampling and debit card transactions. *Journal of Official Statistics*, *41*(1), 382-403. https://doi.org/10.1177/0282423X241293788